



Academic Exploration Paper

Major Decision

20 points

Choosing a major in college is one of the most important decisions a student makes, yet most students choose without doing the research to find out what may lie ahead. In order to make an informed choice or to verify your choice is the correct one, you should complete interest inventories, plan out goals, and consider what career opportunities are available through your selected major. Taking advantage of available resources on campus, looking at department websites, talking to professors in the department, and to students who are already majors are just a few steps toward becoming more informed. In addition, the on campus Career Services Office offers additional resources and assistance to help you in this process.

1. Information to be included:

- ✓ Library- Collect **at least 3** library sources for your research. These will be from scholarly journals, substantial magazines, or books.
- ✓ The Occupational Outlook Handbook (Trends, growth, salary ranges, etc) <http://www.bls.gov/oco/>
- ✓ Career Services & Experiential Learning supporting activities/information: <http://www.csel.ucf.edu>
- ✓ Class Information (i.e. SLS book, goal setting, etc)
- ✓ UCF Undergraduate Catalog (online)
- ✓ Informational Interview (optional)- expert in the field or a professor/instructor within your major

2. Topic to research

- ✓ Use your current major
- ✓ If you are undecided on a major, use the above resources to select the most appropriate area(s) of interest.

3. Suggested Outline

- ✓ Introduction that presents your major. Briefly describe why you chose that major.
- ✓ Discuss fields or other majors that are related to this major (i.e. would a certain minor be appropriate for this field).
- ✓ What occupations match your above major or areas of interest? Of these occupations, pick a minimum of three and include the following information: number of jobs (job growth), best location, earnings (salary), working conditions, opportunities for advancement, future trends, etc.
- ✓ What do you need to accomplish before you can effectively participate in this field? What values do you possess that will help you be successful? Discuss several skills that you need to develop, enhance or obtain to be effective in your field. Discuss how individual courses in both your General Education and your major program will help you develop the needed skills.
- ✓ Conclude with a decision about your next steps to be taken. (Timeline/ action plan/"what do I need to do next?"). Do you continue to pursue this field or begin choosing a new direction to explore? What significant things impacted this choice?

4. Format:

- ✓ Use the guidelines for APA to format your essay. Use the University Writing Center consultants and website for assistance in APA format.
- ✓ Minimum of 5 pages in length, Maximum 5 pages in length
- ✓ Include a works cited page and a cover page. (Neither count for the five pages required.)
- ✓ One-inch margins, double spaced, & 12 point font

5. Timeline:

- ✓ Develop a plan
- ✓ Stay Organized
- ✓ Use your time wisely
- ✓ Make an appointment at the Writing Center

Draft Copy Due via Email: July 21, 2011

Final Printed Copy Due: July 28, 2011